



First 5 - Placer

Fact Sheet 2007 / 2008



Vision

*"The **First 5 - Placer** Children and Families Commission believes all children are our children, therefore we shall create an environment that supports our children and their families in reaching their full potential."*



First 5 Placer Children & Families Commission

The First 5 Placer Children and Family Commission is an independent and autonomous self-governing commission appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The primary purpose of the Commission is to develop and implement a strategic plan for the use of Proposition 10 funds to support early childhood development for children prenatal through 5 years of age and their families. Specifically, the statutory role is outlined as follows:

- Involve the community in developing a strategic plan for children prenatal through 5 and their families;
- Implement the plan and administer the Children and Families Trust Fund;
- Evaluate the plan annually and revise it in response to the changing needs of the community.

The Commission meets at 4:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month at **11820 Enterprise Dr., Auburn, CA 95603**. You are invited to attend and participate in all Commission meetings.



First 5 Placer - Commission Members

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First 5 - Community Resource Committee Members

The Community Resource Committee (CRC) was created to meaningfully involve the community in the work of the Commission. The CRC is comprised of up to three members of the Commission and six members appointed by the Commission from the community. The Committee provides a consistent community contact for First 5 staff and others, and exercises delegated decision-making authority. The goal is that through an inclusive, empowered First 5 CRC, the Commission and the early childhood development community will have several on-going sustainable ways to:

- Incorporate community voices in planning, evaluating and investing First 5 funds;
- Provide an informal vehicle for reporting to the community;
- Provide timely interaction and advice on statewide funding initiatives;
- Broadly and publicly spread the "brain development" message;
- Provide an open community forum for feedback on the work of the First 5 Commission.

The Commission commits to using the Community Resource Committee as a focal point for dealing with issues and opportunities facing children and families in Placer County.

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The Context

Research in brain development clearly indicates that the emotional, physical and intellectual environment that a child is exposed to in the early years of life has a profound impact on how the brain is organized. In addition, the experiences a child has with respect to parents and caregivers significantly influences how a child will function in school and later in life. Here is some information on early childhood development needs that are the basis for the First 5 Children and Families Initiative:

- At birth, the brain is remarkably unfinished. The parts of the brain that handle thinking and remembering as well as emotional and social behavior are very underdeveloped.
- In the early years, a child develops basic brain and physiological structures upon which later growth and learning are dependent.
- The brain operates on a "use it or lose it" principle. Emotionally and socially as well, the child develops many of the abilities upon which later social functioning is based.
- The brain matures in the world, rather than in the womb; thus young children are deeply affected by their experiences.

- Their relationships with parents and other important caregivers; the sights, sounds, smells, and feelings they encounter; and the challenges they meet, affect the way a child's brain develops.
- Stable relationships can ameliorate damage caused by poverty or other difficult environments. The earlier and steadier the intervention, the better.

The early years of a child's life form the foundation for later development. Physical, cognitive, and social emotional development cannot be separated in this period of life, as they are all interrelated. Progress in one area affects progress in the others. Thus, promoting child development is not limited to the academic arena of numbers and letters. The following dimensions of child development are considered important:

- Physical development: Meeting children's basic needs for protection, nutrition and health care.
- Cognitive development and social-emotional development: Meeting children's basic human needs for affection, security, social participation and interaction with others as well as educational needs through intellectual stimulation, exploration, imitation, trial and error, discovery and active involvement in learning and experimentation within a safe and stimulating environment.
- Keep it simple. For example, the number of words an infant hears each day is the single most important predictor of later intelligence, school success, and social competence.

Attention to young children is a powerful means of preventing later difficulties such as developmental delays and disturbances. Increasingly economists are recognizing that investments in “human capital” at the earliest stages of child development reap economic rewards for society. This includes “non-cognitive” skills such as motivation, perseverance, tenacity and self-control.



The Means

California State Proposition 10 levied a 50-cent tax on tobacco products. Revenues generated from this tax are used to fund First 5 Commissions to develop and implement a local comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services as well as tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Through the integration of health care, quality childcare, parent education and effective intervention programs for families at risk, children and their parents and caregivers will be provided with the tools necessary to foster secure, healthy and loving attachments.

Never before in the history of California has there been such a comprehensive, grassroots effort to fully involve the public in deciding how young children's programs should be funded. Prop.10 is designed to ensure that program-funding decisions are made at the local level, calling for extensive input from all segments of the community.

Healthy children who are ready to be successful when they enter school will be the ultimate measure of success; not how fast the money is spent. Since we know that the first years of life (prenatal to five years of age) are the most important for brain development; we must seize this unique opportunity to **invest** the time and effort up front

to develop comprehensive and targeted programs that work for young children and their families.



Anticipated Strategic Results in Three Areas

Over the past 6 years, the First 5 Placer Commission has invested Prop.10 funds in a “partner network” of services and supports for children prenatal through 5 and their families. The network is working for results in the following areas:

1. Improved Family Functioning

Strong Families and Support for Families: All families will have the opportunity to be supported in becoming more knowledgeable and competent in child nurturing, child interaction, child learning and parenting skills, which promote positive child development.

2. Improved Child Development

Children Learning and Ready for School: All children will have opportunities to achieve their optimal development and be socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually ready for school.

3. Improved Child Health and Safety

All Children are Healthy and Safe: All children have access to and receive services ensuring their health care and safety needs are met.



Staff Support 2007 – 2008

First 5 Placer contracts with the County of Placer Health and Human Services Department for staff support.

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Legal Counsel

Visit our Network of Care for Kids site

<http://placer.networkofcare.org>